

Inventory Number 103-3020-0190

REGISTER OF HISTORIC KANSAS PLACES---COVER SHEET

Name of Property Abernathy/Lyle House

Location 508 S. Broadway
(street and number)

Leavenworth
(city, town, or vicinity location)

Lot 2, S138' E230.5', Block B, Latta's Addition
(legal description)

Leavenworth
(County)

Owner of Property Col. August Schanze and Mrs. Schanze

508 S. Broadway
(street and number)

Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas 66048
(city, town, county)

National Register Status:

date approved for nomination to the National Register by Kansas Historic
Sites Board of Review N/A

date entered in National Register N/A

Description: See attached sheet

The Abernathy/Lyle House (c. 1868, 1916) is located at 508 S. Broadway in Leavenworth, Kansas. The building is a modified Italian Villa. Its three dominant features are the large beautifully designed and crafted stone porch, the red overhanging tile roof and the eleven foot tower over the center. The walls of the building are of light grey stucco over the twenty-four inch thick brick walls.

The porch extends eighty feet across the front of the building and the roof extends twenty-one feet further over the porte cochere. The thirty inch high front facing of the porch floor is of cut carthage stone as are the steps. The surface of the nine foot wide porch is of a light grey terrazzo with a very light red nine inch border. The roof of the porch and porte cochere is supported by twenty-four simplified doric concrete columns, each fifteen inches in diameter, and by seven rectangular columns. The porch roof is eleven feet above the floor. Fronting beams supporting the roof from column to column are thirty inches wide and are of formed grey concrete. The sections of the railing around the porch are of urns of shaped concrete with rails at top and bottom and ends at twelve inch rectangular posts. Three six-sided bronze lamps are suspended from the porch ceiling. A railing around the porch roof is of zinc shaped similarly to the porch railing. It is painted a grey, brown color. The south end of the porch wraps around the building to provide a space thirty-five by ten feet plus a nine foot radius curved end.

There are three entrances to the house from the porch. The center entrance which opens into the center hall; the south entrance opens into the dining room and a third entrance, used only for parties in good weather and normally closed, consists of three doors each nine feet high and totaling nine feet in width, opening into the south parlor. The center entrance is an eight by eight foot vestibule with crafted black iron doors backed by plate glass. The outside doors are seven feet high with a three foot rounded metal and glass transom. The floor in the vestibule is also grey terrazzo with red border.

The roof of the main building is of sloping red tile. The five and half foot overhang of the roof is supported by four by eight inch shaped beams painted a very dark red. Each of the four chimneys is topped by a two foot high tan ceramic cap designed to be ornamental and to still allow the smoke to escape. Another feature of the front of the building is the tile topped tower that rises eleven feet above the front edge of the roof. The three round topped windows have black iron ornamentation.

In 1916 the architectural firm of Whyte and Whyte was hired to redesign the Abernathy/Lyle House. The six foot brick walk in front of the house was replaced by six sided, eighteen inch grey concrete blocks with a six inch red tile edging. The U shaped brick drive was removed and re-routed through the porte cochere and on to the rear of the house. A ten foot fountain basin was built between the front of the house and the front steps. An all leaded glass nine foot extension was added to the dining room. On the second floor the extension became a closed-in sleeping porch. A large room, called the hunt room after English and Irish country home rooms, was added behind the north parlor. Over the hunt room an additional bedroom with a small all window sleeping room was added.

The swimming pool building eighty-one by thirty-three feet, designed to match the architecture of the redesigned home, was built in 1916. It is located fifty feet west of the laundry room of the house and is not included in this nomination. There were two dressing rooms at the south end and a two door garage at the north end. Behind the garage was a living room for the chauffeur. Seven pairs of French doors on both the east and west sides of the pool area provided an open-air setting when opened.

From the vestibule the central hall is entered through twin doors of very pale yellow leaded glass. There is a large transom with a design. The stair rail in the hall is of black iron with brass ornamentation. The round hand rail is covered by red velvet. There are two parlors measuring eighteen by twenty-four feet each. The north parlor has framed paneling painted in flat parchment white. The wide top molding is of formed plaster of paris. Radiators carrying circulating hot water are concealed in the walls beneath marble window sills. All floors are light oak. A center bowl-shaped chandelier is entirely made of 5/8 inch cut crystal strung beads with brass framing. The fireplace of white grey-veined marble is beautifully carved. Above it is a framed mirror the width of the top of the fireplace and extending to the molding of the ceiling. The andirons are an example of fine craftsmanship in iron.

Behind the north parlor is the large hunt room, copied from rooms in English and Irish country homes. The floor is of grey terrazzo with a border of red and black and a large star design in black in the center. The nine foot ceiling is beamed in dark mahogany which is also the wood

of the trim. Around the top of the wall are ten fresco paintings of exotic birds in greenery of their natural habitat. The three center-opening windows are of leaded glass. Each of the six panels has a nine inch disc of colored glass butterflies. The plain fireplace facing is of light brown marble ten feet wide at the base and tapering towards the top. The opening for the fire is a normal four feet. Three pairs of wall bracket lights provide the lighting.

The south parlor is where the nine foot high and totaling nine feet wide doors open off the porch. The trim is dark Honduran mahogany. The walls have the same top molding as the north parlor but the walls are not paneled. They are papered. Window sills are of black marble. The fireplace is of CAEN stone and light brown marble. The stone has a shield with fleur-de-lis design in relief over the fire opening. There are two leaded glass book cases on either side of the large opening to the dining room.

The dining room is thirty-eight by eighteen feet. The entire south nine feet is of diamond shaped leaded glass with a double door and four pairs of center opening windows. The three south windows have transoms with colored glass designs. Below the south windows is a low radiator with a 16 x 1½ inch black marble cover extending the width of the room. The moderate temperature of circulating hot water heat made it suitable for green plants through the winter. The beamed ceilings are eleven feet high. The walls are paneled nine feet high and all of the trim is of dark Honduran mahogany. Two leaded glass cases match those in opposite sides of the parlor wall.

The upstairs of the house has two large bedrooms and a huge upstairs living room plus a servants suite of two bedrooms and bath.

In 1956 the house was converted by the present owner into three large apartments without changing the outer appearance of the building. The large kitchen was divided into two kitchens. The laundry room was replaced by a living-bedroom of the same length. Stairs were added to provide a fourth outside entrance to the large studio apartment, formerly the upstairs sitting room.

Significance See attached sheets

Form prepared by Martha Hagedorn-Krass/ Date May 1, 1989
Col. August Schanze (SPONSOR)
This property was approved for listing in the Register of Historic Kansas Places
by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review on May 26, 1989
I hereby certify that this property is included in the Register of Historic
Kansas Places.

Ramon Powers
State Historic Preservation Officer

May 26, 1989
Date

The Abernathy/Lyle House (c. 1868, 1916) is being nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places for its historical associations with the Abernathy and Lyle families of Leavenworth.

Samuel Latta purchased the area now known as Latta's Addition from the U.S. Government in 1860. The Abernathy/Lyle House is located in the center of the addition and on the highest ground of the addition. Mr. Jephtha Ryan built the house in 1868. Ryan was president of Ryan Cattle Company and half owner of one of the four coal mines along the river.

In 1873 James L. Abernathy, born in Leavenworth, president of Abernathy Furniture Company, purchased the house for \$17,000. Mr. Abernathy was also a director of the Leavenworth National Bank. The family firm later moved to Kansas City, Missouri where his grandson was president of the 1st National Bank of Kansas City, Missouri.

In 1916 the architectural firm of Wight and Wight of Kansas City, Missouri were hired to redesign and supervise rebuilding of the house. Whyte and Whyte modified the 1868 Italian Villa, removing the prominent projecting gables, replacing the porch, reconstructing the tower top, and stuccoing the body. When the project was completed, low hipped roof and red tile roofs spanned the house and the tower, a Neo-Classical stone porch extended across the facade and around the two secondary elevations, and the tower fenestration was reduced. Abernathy Furniture Company cabinet makers made all the mahogany cabinets in the south parlor and the nine foot paneling in the dining room. There are three beautiful fireplaces in the house.

The third owner of the house purchased it in 1916 for \$22,500. Mr. Eugene D. Lyle, born in Leavenworth, was president of the J.C. Lyle Milling Company, millers of the once very popular Sunflower flour. The company built the two huge grain storage elevators located on 6th and Choctaw but later sold the plant and moved to California. The house remained in the Lyle estate until 1955.

The fourth and present owner of the house, Colonel A.E. Schanze, U.S. Army Retired, purchased the house in 1956. He was born in Leavenworth in 1900. He was awarded the highest award made by the President of the United States, the Distinguished Service Medal "For exceptionally meritorious and distinguished services in the performance of duties of great responsibility in the Pacific Theatre in 1949". The medal was delivered by General MacArthur. Schanze was later presented with the key to the City of New York by the mayor when he led his regiment down 5th Avenue on the way to Germany.

Wight and Wight rebuilt three large homes in Leavenworth, 3rd and Arch, 508 South Broadway, and 500 South Broadway. They also designed the Stanton home at 611 North 6th Street. The Abernathy/Lyle House maintains a moderately high degree of integrity from the 1916 remodelling period, additional minor changes occurred to the exterior and interior of the building during the 1956 conversion into apartments.